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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 000523

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/24/2016

TAGS: MARR GR IRAO

SUBJECT: GREEK MFA DETAILS IRAQI TRAINING PLANS

REF: A. ATHENS 334

1B. RANK-LEVINE E-MAILS

Classified By: Political Counselor Karen Decker for Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Although discussions were still underway, Bulgaria was likely to agree to host Greek trainers for Iraqi military personnel (ref A), MFA NATO Affairs Division official Andreas Kintis told poloff February 22. Kintis expressed appreciation for the U.S. offer to assist with liaison with Bulgarian authorities (ref B), but said U.S. help might not be necessary. He agreed to provide additional details on the training as they became available, but noted that the Greek government did not want to give the training a high profile because of domestic political sensitivities.

¶2. (C) Greece was also moving forward to fulfill its pledge to train Iraqi medical personnel in Greek military hospitals, Kintis said. In January, after five months of consideration, the Iraqi government accepted the Greek offer. Kintis noted that, while Greece had originally offered to train medical personnel from the Iraqi military, the Iraqi asked that the training be given to civilian doctors. Greece readily accepted this condition, he said, but would still provide the training at Greek military medical facilities. As with the training in Bulgaria, the government preferred to keep this contribution low-key.

Ries